

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

*Page 1, line 16 to page 2, line 4:*

Reference is made to Figure 1A, which illustrates a normal disc as viewed from the feet of a patient up toward the head. The nucleus pulposus 102 is entirely surrounded by the annulus fibrosis 104 in the case of healthy anatomy. Also shown in this cross section is the relative location of the nerves 106. Figure 1B illustrates the case of the herniated disc, wherein a portion of the nucleus pulposus 108 has ruptured through a defect in the annulus fibrosis, resulting in a pinched nerve 110. This results in pain and further complications, in many cases.

*Page 5, lines 13-14:*

FIGURE ~~[[10A]]~~ 10 illustrates an alternative device according to the invention in the form of a resilient plug;

*Page 10, lines 14-20:*

Figure 7A illustrates an alternative approach to fixation, wherein one or more notches 700 may be made into the upper and lower vertebra, preferably through the use of an air-operated drill 704 shown in Figure 7B, having a cutting wheel 702 adapted for such a purpose. Figure 7C illustrates the way in which a flexible body 708 may be retained by the notches 700 described with respect to Figures 7A and 7B. Figure 8 illustrates an alternative orientation of a flexible body 808 having a convex surface facing outwardly with respect to the wall of the disc being repaired.

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The use of flexible stents as described elsewhere herein may take on other forms, as shown in Figures 18A-18D. The device of Figure 18A, for example, preferably includes a body 1802, preferably including a blunt anterior end 1804 to prevent penetration of the anterior annulus, and outer spikes 1806, preferably having different lengths, as best seen in the on-axis view of Figure 18B. Such a stent configuration may provide more areas of contact with the vertebral end plates, thereby decreasing the

changes of stent extrusion. As shown in Figure 18C, the longer spikes 1806 are configured to bend during insertion, thereby preventing posterior extrusion. The shorter spikes, 1806', are sized so as not to engage the vertebrae, and therefore may be made thicker to prevent deflection by disc material. As an option, the shorter spikes 1806' may also be angled in the opposite direction as compared to the longer spikes 1806 to resist migration of the disc material. As yet a further option, the longer spikes may vary in length on the same stent so as to be conformal to the vertebral end plate concavity. As shown in Figure 18D, multiple spikes of this kind may be inserted so as to interlock with one another, thereby preventing migration of the group.